CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method, comprising:

establishing a first set of criteria for calculating a Web services project return on investment;

establishing a second set of criteria for identifying an existing reusable software component;

establishing a third set of criteria for identifying how to expose an existing software asset via a Web service;

establishing a fourth set of criteria for determining whether to include a Web service in a Web services project;

establishing a fifth set of criteria for determining whether to employ a Web services supporting technology;

establishing a sixth set of criteria for identifying a Web services development team;

establishing a seventh set of criteria for identifying one or more of, a project collaboration partner, and how to collaborate with a project collaboration partner; and

selectively organizing one or more members of the first through seventh sets of criteria into a Web services project metaplan.

2.   The method of claim 1, including:

establishing an eighth set of criteria for analyzing an ongoing Web services development project; and

updating the metaplan to include one or more members of the eighth set of criteria.

3.   The method of claim 1, where the first set of criteria includes one or more of, a Web services project development time, a Web services project actual development cost, a Web services project opportunity cost, a Web services project cost savings, and a Web services project anticipated effect on revenue.

4.   The method of claim 1, where the second set of criteria includes one or more of, an existing reusable software component to Web service development time, an existing reusable

software component to Web service development effort, an existing reusable software component to Web service development cost, and an existing reusable software component to Web service return on investment.

5. The method of claim 1, where the third set of criteria includes one or more of, an extensible markup language (XML) orientation for the existing software asset, a SOAP orientation for the existing software asset, a Web services description language (WSDL) orientation for the existing software asset, and a hypertext markup language (HTML) orientation for the existing software asset, where a software asset may include an application or a data set.

6. The method of claim 1, where the fourth set of criteria includes one or more of, a Web service integration cost, a Web service information exposure, a Web service business process need satisfaction, a Web service integration value, a Web service effect on return on investment, a Web service return on investment latency, a Web service return on investment measurability, a Web service operational efficiency, a Web service reliability, a Web service security, a Web service scalability, a Web service maturity, a Web service granularity, a Web service XML usage, a Web service WSDL usage, a Web service SOAP usage, and a Web service business process mapping.

7. The method of claim 1, where the fifth set of criteria includes one or more of, a Web services supporting technology reliability, a Web services supporting technology scalability, a Web services supporting technology security, a Web services supporting technology interoperability, a Web services supporting technology standards orientation, a Web services supporting technology best business practices capturing value, a Web services supporting technology development time, a Web services supporting technology cost, a Web services supporting technology language independence, a Web services supporting technology platform independence, a Web services supporting technology ease of use, a Web services supporting technology XML schema mapping support, a Web services supporting technology WSDL orientation, an information exposure value, and a Web services supporting technology legacy system adaptability.

8.   The method of claim 1, where the sixth set of criteria includes one or more of, a development team member skill set preferred for a project, a development team member experience, a development team member business knowledge, a development team member willingness to participate in return on investment analysis, and a development team member ability to capture best business practices.

9.   The method of claim 1, where the seventh set of criteria includes one or more of, a partner experience with previous Web services projects, a partner XML orientation, a partner WSDL orientation, a partner ability to agree on tag names and meanings, and a partner ability to work incrementally.

10.   A method for producing a Web services project plan, comprising:

referencing a Web services project metaplan;

selectively providing one or more values for one or more elements of the referenced Web services project metaplan; and

producing the Web services project plan in response to analyzing the one or more values.

11.   The method of claim 10, including:

developing a portion of a Web services project based, at least in part, on the Web services project plan; and

selectively refining the Web services project plan in response to analyzing the portion of the Web services project.

12.   The method of claim 11, where analyzing the portion of the Web services project includes evaluating an effect of one or more of, an existing reusable software component, an information exposure technique, a Web services supporting technology, a Web services developer, a project collaboration partner, and a developed Web service on one or more of, a project complexity, a project time to market, a project return on investment, and a project capability.

13.   The method of claim 12, including selectively repeating one or more actions of the method of claim 10 based, at least in part, on the refined Web services project plan.

14.   A method, comprising:

selecting a return on investment evaluation method for evaluating one or more of, a predicted return on investment for a Web services project, and an ongoing return on investment for a Web services project;

creating an existing software asset identification process for identifying an existing software asset that can be included in the Web services project;

creating a Web service identification process for identifying one or more Web services that can be included in the Web services project;

acquiring industry data that identifies one or more of, available Web services software, emerging Web services software, available Web services hardware, emerging Web services hardware, existing Web services standards, and emerging Web services standards;

creating a Web services tool evaluation process for evaluating information about one or more Web services tools;

creating a Web services platform vendor evaluation process for evaluating information about one or more Web services platform vendors;

assembling a Web services project development team based, at least in part, on the return on investment evaluation method, the existing software asset identification process, the Web service identification process, the industry data, the Web services tool evaluation process, and the Web services platform vendor evaluation process; and

producing a Web services project metaplan, where a Web services project can be developed in two or more increments according to a Web services project plan developed from the metaplan.

15.   The method of claim 14, including:

developing a Web services project increment according to the Web services project plan; and

selectively refining the Web services project plan for one or more remaining Web services project increments based on analyzing the developed Web services project increment.

16.   The method of claim 15, where analyzing the developed Web services project increment includes evaluating one or more of, an increment cost, an increment revenue, an increment satisfaction, and an increment information exposure value.

17.   The method of claim 16, including selectively repeating one or more actions of the method of claim 14 based, at least in part, on analyzing the developed increment.

18.   A method, comprising:

developing a strategy for developing a Web services project that includes one or more Web service components;

programming a Web service component of the Web services project based on the strategy;

testing the Web service component;

calculating the effect of the Web service component on a return on investment for the Web services project; and

selectively updating the strategy based on the effect of the Web service component on the return on investment.

19.   The method of claim 18, where the strategy considers return on investment, software reusability, the ability to expose information in new manners, Web services development personnel, Web services supporting technology, and Web services project partners.

20.   The method of claim 18, where testing the Web service component includes testing one or more of, a Web service component reliability, a Web service component scalability, a Web service component interoperability, and a Web service component accessibility.

21.   The method of claim 18, where calculating the effect of the Web service component on return on investment for the Web services project includes analyzing one or more of, a Web service component related cost, and a Web service component related revenue.

22.   A Web services project development method, comprising:

referencing a Web services project metaplan;

producing a Web services project plan from the Web services project metaplan; and

one or more times:

producing a portion of the Web services project according to the Web services project plan; and

selectively refining the Web services project plan based on observing the portion.

23. A system, comprising:

a first logic configured to produce a Web services project metaplan; and

a second logic operably connected to the first logic, the second logic configured to produce a Web services project plan from the Web services project metaplan.

24. The system of claim 23, where the first logic is configured to produce the Web services project metaplan by establishing one or more sets of criteria that facilitate planning a Web services project.

25. The system of claim 24, where the second logic is configured to produce the Web services project plan by providing one or more values for one or more members of the one or more sets of criteria.

26. A system, comprising:

means for producing a Web services project metaplan;

means for producing a Web services project plan from the Web services project metaplan; and

means for refining the Web services project plan based on feedback data acquired from testing one or more portions of a Web services project built according to the Web services project plan.

27. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure comprising:

a first field containing data representing criteria for calculating a Web services project return on investment;

a second field containing data representing criteria for identifying an existing reusable software component;

a third field containing data representing criteria for identifying how to expose an existing software asset via a Web service;

a fourth field containing data representing criteria for determining whether to include a Web service in the Web services project;

a fifth field containing data representing criteria for determining whether to employ a Web services supporting technology;

a sixth field containing data representing criteria for identifying a Web services development team;

a seventh field containing data representing criteria for identifying a project collaboration partner;

an eighth field containing data representing criteria for analyzing an ongoing Web services development project; and

a ninth field containing data representing a Web services project metaplan derived from data stored in one or more of the first through eighth fields.

28.   A method, comprising:

establishing one or more sets of criteria for characterizing a Web services project; and

producing a Web services project metaplan from one or more elements of the one or more sets of criteria.

29.   The method of claim 28, comprising:

producing a Web services project plan from the Web services project metaplan.

30.   A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure comprising:

one or more first fields containing one or more criteria for characterizing a Web services project; and

a second field containing data representing a Web services project metaplan derived from criteria stored in one or more of the first fields.